



## Summer Safety

Staying safe *off* duty is just as important as staying safe *on* duty. More often than not, Sailors and Marines may participate in off-duty activities that can put them at risk for accidents that could have serious consequences. It's important to enjoy your summer *and* be safe at the same time. Here are some top tips to keep you and your family safe this summer:



**Grill the Right Way.** While enjoying the great outdoors, it is important to practice grilling and fireworks safety to prevent unwanted fires. From 2006-2010, gas grills and charcoal/other solid-fuel grills caused an annual average of 7,100 and 1,200 home fires, respectively.<sup>1</sup> It's important to [keep your grill clean](#), [never leave your grill unattended](#), and [use your grill outdoors](#).

**Handle Fireworks Properly.** Fireworks can be fun to watch around the summer holidays and while on vacation, but mishandling fireworks can result in severe burns and unintended injuries. In 2010, emergency rooms treated approximately 8,600 people for firework-related injuries.<sup>2</sup> Remember: Never re-light fireworks or try to pick up fireworks that have already ignited and drench a firework in water after it has fully burned. [Click here for more fireworks safety tips](#).

**Be Aware of the Heat.** With temperatures on the rise during the summer months, service members and their families become more susceptible to heat stress and related heat injuries. When you get too hot, you are at risk of falling ill with [hyperthermia, heat rash, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and other heat related illnesses](#). Heat stress and heat related injuries contribute to [loss in performance, efficiency, and a decrease in operational readiness](#). To prevent heat stress, limit outdoor activity (especially on very hot days) and **drink plenty of water**. For more information on how to prevent heat stress, [watch this video](#).

**Stay Hydrated.** When you're at the beach or swimming in the pool on a hot summer day, it's easy to forget to hydrate. Drinking alcohol in the heat can cause an increase in fluid loss due to frequent urination, which often leads to dehydration. Make sure you drink plenty of water during the day and at summer parties. [Read more about how to stay hydrated \(and safe\) here](#).

**Drive Safely.** With everyone planning their vacations, it is not surprising that routes to popular travel destinations can become increasingly congested during the summer months. Road trippers may encounter dangerous driving situations due to poor planning, bad driving conditions, traffic and other drivers. Always ensure that your vehicle is up-to-date with routine maintenance and get enough sleep *before* you drive. [Check out more of our tips on driving safely this summer](#).

**Learn more about how to stay safe this summer with our Health Promotion and Wellness [Safety Toolbox](#).**

### References

<sup>1</sup>Grilling. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). <http://www.nfpa.org/categoryList.asp?categoryID=298>. Updated January 2013. Accessed 17 May 2013.

<sup>2</sup>Fireworks. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). <http://www.nfpa.org/categoryList.asp?categoryID=297>. Updated June 2012. Accessed 17 May 2013.

